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Congo News Letter

Sona Bata Number

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SONA BATA NUMBER

When the cares of the day are heavy,
And all seems dark and drear,
Then a small still voice is heard to speak;
"Listen my child, I am here.

No matter how hard may be the day
How difficult the task,
I, your Comforter am here to aid
If you my guidance ask."

Then when that still small voice we hear
Our hearts again rebound;
And we thank our Heavenly Father that
Our Comforter we have found.

We ask that each may take the time
To listen to that voice;
Then whether the task be easy or hard
Our hearts may in Him rejoice.

So Father forgive when we worry and fret,
And seem to forget Thy love,
Give us more of Thy Spirit Lord, we pray
To live the life from above.

E. E. SATTERBERG
Sona Bata 1931

HISTORICAL NOTES

FROM THE DIARIES OF
MACDIARMID AND MR. AND MRS. FREDERICKSON

February 1890 —Work begun in the Sona Bata field at Kinjila by Mr. Broholm and Mr. Frederickson.

Kifwa, Sept. 1906 — One week from the time we left Lukunga we arrived at Kifwa which is the largest field, territorially, that our Baptist mission has in Congo. Our missionaries here have an oversight of 1700 Christians, 500 orphans, and more than 100 evangelists and teachers, scattered over a district several days' journey in length.

Kifwa, Congo, Jan. 31, 1907 — Mr. Bain and I have been away for about a week measuring land about sixteen miles from here. The State is to give us land at Nsona Mbata equal to the thirty acres in the Kifwa site. — There is a good place for the station on the hill-top overlooking the railway and I think it will be a healthful spot. There is stone in the valley that can be used for pillars for the houses and I believe there is durable timber also."— P. A. MACDIARMID.

* * *

The year 1906 has been greatly blessed, 648 were baptized, church membership is 1,799, 110 preacher-teachers, enrolled in all schools 1510 — (1183 boys, 327 girls and women) — 10,476 treated in dispensary.

* * *

Kifwa February 1907 — Messrs Bain, Clark, MacDiarmid and Fred went to Sona Bata to look over the land and put corner stones for our new station, this place is much higher than Kifwa, and not so damp. — To this place Reverends A. L. Bain and P. A. MacDiarmid moved the houses from Kifwa, while Mrs. Frederickson and I went home on furlough in 1907. —

Sona Bata 1911 — A postoffice has been opened at Madimba 9 miles from Sona Bata. We now get mail every three weeks — Sona Bata R.R. Halt bears only the mark "kilometer 301."

August 29, 1911 — Everyone was at the depot giving a hearty

welcome to Rev. P. A. MacDiarmid and his pretty bride. Lovely flowers and green vines were covering both gates of the compound, and above were the words: "WELCOME TO SONA BATA."

August 30, 1912 — Dr. R. Nauss arrived at Sona Bata to take over the large medical work.

1914 — Rev. and Mrs. J. Geil came to Sona Bata where they spent a term of strenuous work.

April 1918 — Mrs. Frederickson went to Léopoldville to take the course in tropical diseases. She was the first woman to take the course. The government supplied us with a microscope after she finished the course, and she was given the work of examination and treatment of tropical diseases, and signing of medical passports.

August 1918 — The foundation of the Sona Bata church was laid.

Sept. 14, 1919 — The Sona Bata brick church was dedicated today. Mr. J. Geil preached the dedication sermon. There are enough benches to seat 500. P. FREDERICKSON

Easter 1920 — We had a reunion of all our Boarding-school girls, even to the very first girls from 1893. Mrs. Moody wrote invitations and sent out. Thirty-six girls came and many wrote nice letters. On the station were our two nurses and 27 younger girls still in school. It did us good to see them again—one had 5 children, one 6, and one carried twins. Some we had not seen for 10 years. After a feast we asked the girls to tell us what they had done since they left school. Some had sent their children to school, some had taught their own children to pray and to read, a few helped teach and take services and some had nursed sick ones. Monday all left for their humble homes and work. May God bless them all !

Mrs. P. FREDERICKSON

SONA BATA

P. A. MACDIARMID

The name signifies "the market on the hilltop." In the long ago there was a market where the Mission now stands. The missionaries would say theirs is a market such as is spoken of in

Isaiah 55:1–3. Sona Bata was the third attempt to find a healthful central place to evangelize the area between the Inkisi River and Stanley Pool, and eastward as God should open a road for the Evangel.

The first station was at Kinjila on the old caravan road, shortly after the crossing of the Inkisi on the way to the Pool. Two Danish missionaries, Emmanuel Broholm (uncle of Mrs. B. W. Armstrong) and Peter Frederickson, opened the station at Kinjila in February 1890, after investigating and finding that there were 22 villages within easy reach. The first night they had no beds, so slept on the clay floor of a hut with their coats over blocks of wood for pillows. Very soon Mr. Frederickson had to return to Banza Manteke to prepare to take Mrs. Frederickson and baby Henrietta for furlough, and Mr. Broholm was alone most of the time during the next year and a half. He gathered sixteen boys into school, and in March 1891 baptized the first two of these. He found much joy in winning his boys to Christ. But when Mr. Frederickson returned to Kinjila in November 1891 he found a very sick colleague. Mr. Broholm had walked that day two hours in a heavy rain. He soon developed blackwater fever, and five days later died. His sacrificial life and death made a profound effect upon the natives, and to the older Christians his grave has been hallowed ground.

In September 1892 Rev. and Mrs. Christian Nelson, sent by the Danish Baptists of America to take Mr. Broholm's place, reached Kinjila. The next year Mrs. Frederickson, for the first time, gathered a group of native girls into school. Many of the men thought girls couldn't learn anything, and besides how would that help them to make good *kwanga* (native bread from manioc)?

As villages to the south and east of Kinjila entreated the missionaries to send teachers it became evident that the station was far from the center of the field. This led to a hunt for a new site. The Government refused to grant land at Kisantu, afterwards the headquarters for the Jesuits. Finding a good spring near Kifwa village, and a stream where the school children could bathe, the missionaries applied for land there and obtained it. Here the station was opened in 1895, and that same year two boys, who were prominent for years in the work of the Mission were

baptized. These were Stefan Bangu and Moses Kikwakwa.

The writer of this article spent his first months in Congo at this station in 1906, living in the mud-and-wattle building erected as a dispensary by Dr. Kirby who spent his first term in Congo and the rest in Assam. Here I had my first bouts with malaria, and my first difficulties with the native language. One day as I was recovering from a siege of malaria I asked my native helper for my tooth-brush and dental cream. He soon appeared bringing a cake of blanco and a shoe-brush.

The work was going well with Kifwa as center, ever widening its influence until the Gospel entered the Bamfunuka country to the east. But there was one great hindrance. Unnoticed when the site was chosen was a swampy mosquito-breeding place not far from the compound. Fevers sapped the strength of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson, she dying at Kifwa in 1901 and he in London on his way home with little Stella. At that time most missionaries thought that malaria was brought by the damp night air and not by mosquitoes, so they would tightly close all doors and windows at nightfall.

In 1905 Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Bain were designated to Kifwa to help the Fredericksons and in 1906 P. A. MacDiarmid joined this small group.

Once more it was decided that the station should be moved —this time to a more healthful site, so a place near the new Matadi-Léopoldville railway line was sought. In those days it was difficult to secure land for Protestant Missions as some of the missionaries had been outspoken in condemning the Rubber Regime. Failing to obtain sufficient land at Madimba, Sona Bata was chosen as the next most central place. The plot of land first granted here was in exchange for the site at Kifwa.

In the spring of 1907 the Fredericksons went on furlough with their daughter Lila, and Messrs Bain and MacDiarmid began to make loads of all building materials that could be salvaged at Kifwa. Over two hundred man-loads of about sixty pounds each were thus transported to the new site, sixteen miles away. One sturdy fellow always received double pay as he carried two loads instead of one.

The walls and roofs of the first three-roomed living quarters,

and of the building that served as both church and school, were of corrugated iron sheets. Then two residences were erected on stone pillars, partly using timber sawed in the woods near Sona Bata, and lumber, some of which had been in service already at three mission stations Lukunga, Kinjila, Kifwa. Now at Sona Bata it was to make its last fight against termites, being replaced eventually by burned brick. Today the 67 brick buildings of the station evidence not only a great advance in material equipment but an attempt to meet the spiritual and physical needs of several hundred boys and girls, men and women, in training to interpret Christ in the villages all the way from the Portuguese border to near Léopoldville, and from the Inkisi River to within a short distance of the Kwango.

From 1910 to 1920 three families were in service at Sona Bata most of the time except during furloughs—the Fredericksons, Moodys and MacDiarmids. The work on the station was carried on in cooperation but each family had responsibility for a separate area in the church and village school work—the Fredericksons for the district west of the railway and Léopoldville, the Moodys for the east of the railway towards the Kwango, and the MacDiarmids for the section to the southeast, through Nselo to the Portuguese border.

Just as the Fredericksons went home to retire in 1921 a great spiritual awakening was sweeping across the field. In places it was misguided by so-called prophets seeking power and leadership, but in general it was a tidal wave of genuine search to know God in Christ. For eight consecutive years over a thousand were baptized each year into fellowship with their Lord—then came smaller numbers for several years, to be followed in recent times by another Pentecostal ingathering.

MISSIONARY INFLUENCE IN THE SONA BATA FIELD

So many missionaries have made their influence felt upon the natives of this area that it would sound like a chapter in Chronicles to name them all—or would it be more like the eleventh chapter of Hebrews?

Let us speak of two who did most to lay the foundations—Mr. and Mrs. Peter Frederickson. Peter Frederickson did not

have the scholastic training that many missionaries have had, but he had good common sense, a zeal for the spreading of the Good News of Salvation, initiative that would not allow him to remain in a rut, and a great faith in those who chose the Moyo Wampa (New Life) that was his constant theme. Men like Kikwakwa, Bangu, Nkusu and Nsiata were amongst those who caught his spirit, giving long years to winning people to Christ.

While Mr. Frederickson exerted his influence through evangelism and the establishment of local churches, Mrs. Frederickson exerted an equally powerful influence through the school and medical work. My earliest recollection of medical service in Congo is of seeing this good woman and her helper, Mfiengi, dispense medicine from a cupboard on her back veranda to a crowd of natives. The brass rods received in payment or part payment, were dropped through a hole in an upended Morton provision case. Mfiengi, MaNgunga and others caught from her a vision of Christian service. Mrs. MacDiarmid gives to Mama Fe (as the natives lovingly called her) much credit for anything she was able to do for the women and girls during her life in Congo. What a joy it has been to Mama Fe to hear of the development of the station school to higher standards, and of the opening of so many regional schools; to hear also of the medical work conducted in a brick hospital with several wards; then of its Medical School for the whole Mission, and of the opening of rural dispensaries !

And what shall one say of those who followed in the trail of these two pioneers—of the Moodys whose evangelistic zeal opened up new territory; of Dr. King who began the Medical School in spite of strong opposition in certain quarters; of Dr. and Mrs. Tuttle who have done so much for the School that other Missions have gained confidence in the ability of Protestant Missions to join in a Union Medical School that we trust is going to make a great contribution to the Christian witness in Congo ? Amongst the others who have written Christ's name and their own in the hearts of many in that district are,—Etelka Schaffer, Esther Ehnbom, Emily Satterberg, Vendla Anderson, the Ericksons, the Hooks, the Armstrongs, the Atkins, the Freases, Mildred Tice, the Metzgers, Helen Gaskill, Jean Luckey, and Drs. Jean and Philip Austin, to mention some who have given service to that field.

Others who gave of their best for a lesser time are not mentioned here but their names are written in the Book of Life.

WOMEN'S WORK AT SONA BATA

JEANNETTE TUTTLE

AMONG my treasures I have a hand-written article done some 20 years ago by Mrs. Thomas Moody on women's work in the district of Sona Bata. Whether this was ever published or not I do not know, but from it I copy exerpts which give first-hand experiences of early women missionaries.

"The Congo woman has sat in her hut, gone to her garden, cooked her food, eaten and slept. Each day brought the same routine in her colorless life, never going beyond the boundary of the market place unless her elders could get a larger dowry by giving her in marriage to a man of a different tribe.

"In the beginning when the missionary arrived in the town, the Congo women took children and ran to the forest in fear. By and by curiosity overcame them and they asked all kinds of questions: Are your feet white under your shoes ? Will you take off your glasses so we can see your eyes ? etc."

"A missionary woman arrived at a heathen town one evening at sunset. The women ran in all directions, but the missionary succeeded in intercepting one. 'What are you afraid of the white woman for ? I am Mama ..... Did you never hear of me ?' 'Are you Mama ..... ? My husband got medicine from you which cured his ulcer, and he told me all about you. You have a baby ! Then she shouted to the women who were hiding in the forest around the village, 'What are you afraid of ? This is Mama .....She is a woman just like us. She has a baby !' They had one thing in common, motherhood, and became friends. How eagerly they listened to the story of the Babe of Bethlehem. In other towns the women would keep in hiding as the missionary talked and would listen from their hiding places.

"We have our dreams of what we would like our women's

work to be out in the district. But it seems as though we have only taken our first step, but first steps are necessary if the dream is ever to be more than a dream."

Several missionary women, too many to mention, have contributed in the taking of these first steps. The great love that our Congo women hold for each one of them is tribute to the untiring efforts which have been put forth down through the years. Mrs. Moody tells a bit about this.

"Just a wayside ministry, the women hear the missionary will pass along the trail. They come from their towns and sit by the path till she comes along. They have a chat, a short service, she gives their sick babies medicine and sends medicine to some who were not able to walk to the trail where she was passing by.

"When the light dawns in the heart of our Congo woman, she joins the enquirers' class. 'Take my yoke upon you and learn of me'. The learning is a hard task. It is pathetic to hear the older women trying to repeat a verse or answer some simple question. The other day in the class I asked a woman, 'What did Jesus save us from ?' While she hesitated, her three year old baby said, '*Masumu meto* (our sins)'. As the mother struggles on the child is imbibing the truth.

"Now when we come to most villages, the old women, middle aged and young all come running out to meet us singing and clapping their hands. The missionary may have had a long hard day's travel through forests, swamps and over mountains; but the happy faces act like a charm and she soon forgets how dreadfully tired she is. A silent prayer goes from her heart thanking our Heavenly Father for the divine love interpreted in terms of kindness to one another. The church has no stately architecture, the pastor, Bible woman or deaconess has no diploma from a school, but their hearts are aflame with the love of Christ.

"In the early days if we had a dozen women at a service we were grateful. Last June at a place about 100 miles from our station I had over 1000 women at my meetings.

"The native women are developing and taking a share in the work. The deaconesses feel responsible for the needs of the women in the churches. Other women are helping their husbands with the school work. Several now will get up and speak at our

meetings. They speak with fervor and zeal. It shows what the love of Christ has done in the uplifting of womanhood. They have grown and are emerging out of darkness into His marvelous light. They are taking their rightful places as wives, mothers, and women in the church and community. God's brooding presence is over the Congo women developing and perfecting the Christ spirit in them and lifting them to higher levels year by year."

Had it not been for the work of our pioneer women missionaries, we could not tell you today of some of our outstanding Sona Bata women leaders who have emerged from darkness into His wonderful light, who have, for the most part, been brought up in Christian homes, who have gone to Mission schools and competed with boys, discovering that their intellect was not inferior to that of the men as their mothers had been taught, and who have taken Christ as their own personal Savior, giving their lives unreservedly to Him. We are thankful for each one of these and praise God that in spite of lack of staff to do the district women's work as it should be done and as we would like to do it, He still rules and over-rules and brings forth leaders. There is a challenge today for work amongst the youth of Congo, the young women in particular, which I believe has never been greater. Many have a knowledge of the way of salvation without an experience of knowing Him as personal Saviour, the One and only One who can cleanse us from our sins. This challenge is being partially met by girls' camps which some of our missionaries have been holding in the district with success. But when these missionary women are so few and have already more work than one person should be asked to do, how can they reach all the young women in the 10,000 square mile area of our Sona Bata field ? Our Lord's work at Sona Bata will never die out, but it can be retarded and kept in slow motion or it can be speeded in accordance with the responsibility which we in America as children of God accept in carrying out Christ's command. "Feed my sheep." Which will it be ? The doors are open and time is precious. May each of us ask this question, "Will I be held responsible for any unsaved souls in Congo when we bring our tokens to our Master's feet ?"

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed ? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have

not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?"

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST—SONA BATA

ROLAND J. METZGER

SONA BATA represents one of the older areas of mission endeavor in Congo, and a brief examination of the present stage of development and the problems in this field may be of interest. We will consider only the churches, and not the schools connected with them.

The area served from Sona Bata station covers more than 10,000 square miles and has a total population of about 155,000. The field can be considered in three sections: (1) the part beginning at Léopoldville and reaching about 10 to 15 miles on either side of the Léopoldville–Matadi railroad as far as the commercial center at Inkisi-Kisantu; (2) the main middle area from the railroad strip east to the Nsele river and south to the auto road from Inkisi to Kibambi; (3) the eastern and southern extremities between the Nsele and Lubisi rivers and south to the Angola (Portuguese) border.

The first area is filled with many commercial enterprises such as wood-cutting, brick and cement block making, the preparation of crushed rock, and many small plantations of great variety. The villages are very small and consist of a few mothers with their small babies (the fathers working in Léo), but mostly old people. Almost all the men and young people are away working for the companies, or in Léopoldville.

The second area has the bulk of the population. There are many roads (some of very dubious passability), and most of the people make a good living by raising large quantities of produce which are bought and shipped to Leo by native and Portuguese traders whose trucks go everywhere.

The third area is sparsely populated. The eastern part consists of the Bamfunuka people, related to the great Bateke tribe and very unresponsive to civilization and the Gospel. The south-

eastern and most distant section, reached by the road to Popokabaka and the Kwango river, is inhabited by people related to the Bayaka. They have been very backward although making rather rapid progress at present. The south-western section is largely inhabited by Bazombo from Portuguese Angola, whose main occupation is trading and who move about a great deal.

The Salvation Army have a large work in the northern part of the railroad strip, centering at Kasangulu. They also have considerable work reaching out now into the northern part of middle area. There are eleven Roman Catholic stations in the same area in which the missionaries of Sona Bata work. Several of these stations are very large, and especially the one at Kisantu. With their large staffs of white missionaries and their numerous Congolese priests, they carry on an extensive and active work.

As of November 30, 1950, we had 8332 church members in good standing and in our active file. There are several thousand more who have been lost through their lack of interest or have been suspended from church membership because of sin. These 8332 Christians live in 621 different villages and are organized into 49 churches, a church including from 2 to 41 villages. The churches are served by 235 teacher-evangelists, 16 Bible women, and 37 pastors.

Leadership is one of our most serious problems for the future. We have a number of old pastors with more than 30 or even 40 years in the Lord's service. Some attended our union school for pastors at Kimpese in the early days of that school, but none have training comparable to the Kimpese standards of today. These men built the churches in the early days and led in the great revivals, especially in the 1920's. They are still making a great contribution and furnish the strength and stability so necessary in these days. But change is hard for them even though they are anxious to advance. We also have a few young men who have had a two year Bible training at Kimpese, but they are weak on experience. The big gap is seen in the lack of young, well-trained men coming along to take the places of our older men in the rapidly changing life of Congo today. The churches and mission have been largely unable to hold the Kimpese graduates of recent years against the pull of the large centers and many times the financial rewards.

The second major problem is the spiritual life of the individual Christians. Money and all that is a part of the very rapid advance of this near-to-Leo area have not aided in their spiritual growth. There are exceptions, but to a great degree the church does not hold the place of major importance in the lives of its members as it did forty, thirty, or even twenty years ago.

But the picture is not all dark. During 1950 in the Sona Bata field there were 550 baptized and 395 restored to church fellowship. Of those baptized 161 were children from our schools. 43 of the 49 organized churches are entirely self-supporting, and the other six receive almost nothing from the mission. Apart from the share that they themselves bear, the rest of the support of those six churches comes from the other 43 churches.

The churches pay 5% of the monthly offerings into a common fund from which all travel expenses of Kimpese students are met, as well as the cost of transferring a pastor from one area to another. The fund also covers the costs of the bi-annual conference of delegates from the churches, and of sending delegates to larger conferences. A pastor receives a fixed monthly salary of from 100 to 250 francs (2 to 5 dollars), plus 10% of the monthly offering, plus 5 francs (10 cents) per day for each day that he is travelling to visit the villages of his church. All this is paid by the church. The church also pays the salaries of the village teacher-evangelists (which are usually far too low), and all other expenses connected with the activities of the church.

Each year a special "matondo" (thanksgiving) offering is received. In 1950 this amounted to over 41,000 francs (820 dollars). From this offering comes the money to help the 6 churches not entirely self-supporting. The money of this offering also helps each school in the purchase of books and other supplies. From this offering, too, comes the money to help a church when they are building a brick church building. The church itself is responsible for the building, doors and windows, benches, etc., but they can receive up to one-half the cost of cement for pointing and for the floors. The cost of the roofing iron (but not the lumber nor the labor) for a good roof is also met from "matondo" funds. Thirty-two of our churches have brick buildings, and six more are in various stages of a building program.

All churches are self-governing with a monthly meeting of the local membership, and two meetings each year of the Sona Bata Association. Three missionaries (evangelistic, medical, and educational) are delegates to the latter meetings.

On the whole the churches are well established. Most of the leaders are devoted to their calling. Hundreds and hundreds of the men and women are truly "born again," and faithful to their Lord. For all of the weaknesses, it is still "The Church of Christ—Sona Bata," and it is He who is working through each member and leader to win the lost of this part of Congo to Himself.

SAND OR MUD

ROLAND G. METZGER

YOU may take your choice and we will furnish both in abundance in the Sona Bata field. However, sand is found over a larger part of the area, and is more often the cause of trouble when the missionary itinerates in the district. Whether travelling on foot or by truck it is an enemy of rapid progress.

In the dry season the sand becomes soft and dry and loose. The feet sink down deep, and at each step the forward thrust is completely lost in the sand's yielding softness. Going up a hill demands all of one's energy. The sand is powdery fine, and every step raises a cloud of dust. All except the first of the group, following single file the narrow winding paths, are soon breathing as much dust as air. At the close of a day of this strenuous exercise one is drenched in perspiration and thickly coated with seemingly half of the land mass so painfully traversed.

The dry season sand is the much-beloved home of the very little-beloved jigger. During one week last year the writer had an average of six a day removed from his toes and feet. Before they are removed, and usually for a day or more after, the spot where the jigger entered the skin itches and burns. Sleep often becomes difficult at night because of their presence or recent presence in the skin.

Travelling by truck is a real adventure as the sand becomes deeper and softer with the advance of the dry season. Even the most skilled driver from America must learn new skills. The cardinal rule is to keep moving, for slowing down or stopping may be disastrous.

Driving over an infrequently travelled road, pulling hard in first gear through soft sand, a nanny goat and week-old kid suddenly darted out in front of the truck from the thick brush alongside the road. My foot on the brake saved the baby goat and its mother, but we were stuck. Fifteen minutes later we were only six feet further on our way and six inches deeper in the sand. With the help of near-by villagers, and with much strain on motor, clutch, and gears, we were bouncing happily on our way after still another sixty minutes.

On another trip we asked, "Are you sure the road into the village of Kilumbu is good?" "Oh yes" was the quick and reassuring answer. So, five miles further along, we turned with difficulty from the deep ruts in the soft sand of the "main" road and entered upon the less frequently travelled "side" road. Before we could even wonder whether the road was good or not we had come to a stop. The truck was only twenty feet from where we had turned off. An attempt was made to go ahead, but it was obvious that the sand was impassable. Two and one-half hours later we had the truck back on the "main" road. Four and one-half minutes per foot. We unloaded the truck, found men to act as carriers, and started to walk the five miles to Kilumbu. One hundred yards of soft sand and then, just around a bend in the road, the sand was finished. So near, and yet so impossibly far. During all the five miles not another place was found that could not easily have been traversed by the truck.

Children love to play in it, but I could happily do with less sand when itinerating.

HEALING THE SICK

Dr. G. W. Tuttle

IN carrying out Christ's command to "heal the sick", early missionaries gave modern medicine a prominent place in the missionary program at Sona Bata. While there were no doctors or registered nurses on the staff for 23 years, yet practical nurses, notably Mrs. Peter Frederickson, did much to alleviate the physical suffering of the Congolese and saved many lives. Patients came in such large numbers that early she had to begin the training of African helpers such as Mama Mbudi and Tata Mfiengi.

Mrs. Frederickson carried on valiantly until Dr. Nauss appeared on the scene in 1912. When he left on furlough Mrs. Frederickson and others resumed supervision of the medical work until the arrival of Dr. Judson King in 1925. His first term at Sona Bata was spent initiating the erection of a 70-bed hospital and laying the foundation for a large medical work. He returned to the homeland in 1927, a very sick man.

When the writer arrived in 1928 the medical work was being carried on in a two–room frame dispensary by Miss Esther Ehnbom. The patients slept in two brick buildings (barracks type) with only thin native mats on which to sleep. The administrative unit of the new hospital had been completed except for furniture, but the wards and operating room consisted only of walls and a roof. As rapidly as possible doors and windows were made locally by Congolese carpenters and cement floors laid by Congolese masons, permitting us to transfer our medical service to the new set of buildings, still far from complete, in October 1928.

With facilities to care for more patients and the doctor partially freed from the necessity of supervising a building program, patients began to come in rapidly increasing numbers. They, with their relatives, slept like logs on the floors of the wards. One night we counted 72 lying in three rows in a room 18 × 30 feet.

Surgery was begun on a small scale, so small that less than half of those who came returned with the coveted operative scar. The first operation was performed on the dining room table of

one of the missionaries and the patient put to bed on a door from a mud hut laid across two logs. When beds did arrive patients, even those with broken bones, would crawl down onto the cement floor during the night. However, it wasn't many weeks until a woman came one evening very concerned and provoked because her sick husband was given only a mat instead of a bed on which to sleep.

From the beginning the sick had to count on being fed by a relative or friend. To insure having fresh meat, patients often brought goats, sheep and pigs which had to be staked out in the hospital compound. One man brought a hen which laid a nest full of eggs and hatched them out so that we had little chickens running around under our feet while making rounds.

To care for the rapidly increasing number of patients it became necessary to recruit and train several practical nurses. When furlough time rolled around for the doctor there wasn't another to take his place so Miss Emily Satterberg, the nurse, had to hold the fort during his absence.

One term on the field sufficed to convince the writer that never would the churches in the homeland find it possible to supply adequate doctors and nurses to treat all the sick people in Congo. Consequently he was lead to concur in the opinion of his predecessor that the establishment of a school for the training of African assistants was imperative. The return of the two of us at about the same time permitted the mission to seriously consider and subsequently decide to open a school of nursing in February 1933.

The first classes were taught in the homes of the staff members with both teachers and nurses worrying through a three year course given entirely in French except for classes in Bible doctrine and personal evangelism which were taught in Kikongo. Before presenting themselves for an examination, corresponding to our State Boards, the embryo nurses were sent back to their hospitals of origin or out into rural clinics for two years of practical experience. Finally, after five long years, the coveted diploma was received, recognizing the recipients as registered nurses.

Since the first class graduated in 1938 almost one hundred nurses have gone out into various types of service. All of these

have been men with the exception of three who are the only African women registered nurses in the Belgian Congo today. A large number of these have remained in the service of our Protestant Missions working in the Congo. Many others have been lured to government and company jobs by the prospect of receiving higher salaries. Most of them are faithful in their witness to Christ as Lord and Savior, some of them having become outstanding leaders in their local churches.

Until 1933 leprosy had not presented itself as a problem. Within a short period half a dozen leprosy patients came seeking help. Special buildings were singled out for their occupancy but by the time the group had reached 20 we decided to inaugurate a leprosy colony. Financial help was soon forthcoming from the local government and the American Leprosy Missions for the erection of the necessary homes, clinic, chapel, etc. At the present time there are almost a hundred leprosy patients, many of which are receiving some of the newest drugs.

By 1937 it was found possible to open our first rural clinic in order to make modern scientific medicine available to the thousands of Africans living 50–100 miles away from any hospital. During 1949 over 45,000 cases (a patient who comes with three different diseases is counted as 3 cases) were treated in eight rural clinics by our African registered nurses.

Steady and constant growth in the number of Africans seeking physical and spiritual help lead to the erection of a maternity unit in 1942 and the rebuilding of our operating room in 1949. Although the physical equipment for our hospital was begun in 1925 and has been contantly expanding it is still far from adequate to meet our needs.

While the more strictly medical and physical aspects of our program have been emphasized we never cease to thank God that through our presentation of the marvelous story of Jesus Christ and His salvation we have been able to have a part in winning many thousands into a vital fellowship with Him.

GIFT DAY AT MBEMBA

Dr. E. W. Price

MBEMBA is a village of two hundred Africans and is situated in the cleft of a valley. The head of a stream runs out of the hills which surround it. On the slopes of these low hills are the gardens of the villagers—maize, ground-nuts, manioc according to the season. The huts converge on the village green, which is bordered by the brick house of the village chief, the dispensary, the school chapel, and a small hospital of three rooms—for Mbemba is a village for the treatment of leprosy.

The road from the village green leads across the stream by a small bridge to another village—a village of children, the healthy families of their parents at Mbemba. Their dormitories and school, with the house of the African medical helper and the school-mother stand on three sides of the open space where forty children play, sing (and fight if necessary). From this place the road winds up the sandy hill and out of the valley to the Sona Bata mission three miles away.

Mbemba is a happy place; visitors have often remarked on it. Of course, everyone would prefer to be free to go where they please, and to live at home among their own people. But let one of the villagers explain.

"Yes, we are happy, really. Of course, there are days when things look glum. For instance, I'm never at my best the afternoon after the injection, and that's twice a week. But this new medicine does make us better, in fact several of us have gone home better during this year. I wanted to go myself, but the Doctor says it's not quite time yet, and as my two children are in school over at the other village, I don't really mind.

"I suppose, too, we're happy because there is so much to do. I used to make baskets, when there wasn't any more demand for chairs; and now that the run on baskets is done I'm making string. I don't get the fibre from the forest myself because my feet aren't too good, but Dua does that, and as his fingers can't do fine work, I make the string with the fibre he brings, and we divide the money we get from selling it.

"Recently, we've been working to get some money to help build an African pastor's house at the new mission in the Bayaka tribe. We usually try to work to help people who aren't as well off as we are; at one time it was the people with tuberculosis, but now it's the Bayaka."

"We talked about it at one Sunday morning service, and it was even suggested that we might get a thousand francs; I wasn't sure whether that was meant to be serious or not. However, we saved up for two months and then had Gift Sunday."

"I'll remember it for a long time. I washed and ironed my trousers, and wore the new shirt that the Government sent for each of us recently. What a service it was ! The procession and the clapping, the laughing and the singing, all mixed up with the Bible reading and the prayers. I didn't give all I brought with me the first time, because it's much more fun giving a bit more when they count up the collection and find it isn't quite enough. Then I join the procession a second time and put the rest of it on the plate on the Communion table. When we counted it all up, it came to 610 francs. They figured out somewhere that we needed 390 francs more, and everyone agreed that we should give it from our church savings; and then we counted it all out on the Communion table and it came to a thousand francs, and everyone was so excited. No one wanted to keep it in their hut in case it was stolen during the night, so the Doctor took it home until the pastors came.

"Fortunately, the African pastors were all at Sona Bata for a conference, so they came out on Tuesday morning to accept the gift. We didn't tell anyone how much it was. I never saw so many pastors at once before—three truck loads of them. We had a short service and then our village Chief got up and told them that we had collected this for the pastor's house at the new mission among the Bayaka people. Then the Doctor told us that it was the sign of the Holy Spirit in our hearts because in other ways we Bakongo don't like the Bayaka much. It's strange, too, but actually we've enjoyed all the work and the giving even more than when we receive things ourselves from people."

* * *

Yes, and it's an inspiration to those of us who serve them medically and who help at their Sunday worship. The cheery, if raucous, singing and the ready response to the speaker, the reverent silence in the little chapel and the enthusiastic noise in the Sunday school certainly show that a living contact with our Heavenly Father and a personal knowledge of His care and forgiveness far outweigh the disabilities that are caused by leprosy.

BABY CLINIC

EMILY E. SATTERBERG

OUT under a very large and beautiful mango tree the mothers gather with their children each Tuesday morning. They make a very colorful picture as they sit around in groups.

The baby clinic has been one of our projects for a good many years. When we compare our first clinics with those of today we find that great progress has been made in all ways. Today the majority of the babies are clean, they wear clothes, there is very little skin disease and rarely do we see them with tropical ulcers nor do we see burns on their little bodies.

Each week the babies are weighed, examined, given the medicines they need as well as a piece of soap. They also receive gifts from our White Cross and these gifts help to keep the mothers interested and coming week by week. In this way our friends in the homeland help us in our clinics.

It is interesting to watch the growth of the babies. We keep them in clinic until they are three years old or until they weigh fifteen kilos. They are then given a dress as their farewell gift.

The mothers are given instructions in the care of their children as well as general hygiene. After this they are given a Bible lesson and we hope and pray that the Word of God will find hearts in which to grow. Also that all these mothers will become Christians and make Christian homes for these little ones.

SCHOOL ON A PALM TREE HILL TOP

VENDLA ANDERSON

The Beginning

THE Palm Tree Hill Top is Sona Bata. It was so named, because there was once a market on the hill. In the Kikongo language, market is *nsona* and hill, *mbata*. Drop the first letters *n* and *m*, and we have Sona Bata. The market became a mission station with church, school and hospital. The selling of food and merchandise ceased on the Hill Top and the preaching of the Gospel of Christ became the chief concern. But, why a school? some ask. Was it not sufficient to preach and to heal? Do you realize that these people of Congo did not know how to read? Why should not they, as well as you, be able to study the Word of God? From this school, came the Congolese Christian leaders for the work of evangelism. Many others, through them, were led to accept Christ as their personal Savior. "The Light of the World" radiated from the Hill Top into an area increasingly large. Before long, the station was the center of small village chapels and schools. Those farthest away were the beginnings of new mission posts. Even today, Congolese Christians of Moanza and Kikongo speak of Sona Bata as the mother of their stations.

Before mission work was established on the Hill Top, schools had already been held at Kinzila and Kifwa. Old class registers of Kinzila are dated 1893 to 1896; of Kifwa, 1897 to 1906. Then come those for Sona Bata, beginning in 1907. Missionary pioneers started the schools, and others have since been building on this early foundation.

Sona Bata Schools in 1931

In 1931 there were two brick school buildings on the station. One was the first Sona Bata church, a room about 25 feet by 15 feet. Along one side of it, had been added a narrow verandah with roof and walls of grass. The furniture was long tables, made of roughly finished boards with benches to match. To this school came a few hundred boys and girls from surrounding villages. Those who lived far away became boarders and enrolled in the

Boarding School. Others who could go home every day, attended the Day School. Though both boys and girls were accepted, only boys managed to reach the advanced classes. The program was as yet quite elementary, except for the so-called "French class", offered to those who had completed the lower grades. The most important subjects taught were: Bible, reading, writing and arithmetic. There were no experienced teachers except for one who gave half of his time to the Print Shop. The students of the "French class" were the teachers. They taught in the morning and attended their own class in the afternoon. The other pupils were required to do four hours of manual labor — garden work and odd jobs on the station, as cutting grass, cleaning the yards and sweeping paths. Because of the great need of teachers in the villages, the boys generally stayed on the station only one year or two, then taught for a year or more in a village school. Many returned for further training, going back again to the villages. This system furnished village teachers in large numbers, but made it difficult to improve standards.

The second school building was called the "Prep" School. It was built to be a training school for village teachers, especially for those who had not been able to attend the Boarding School. The students were young and old. They left their village work for a few months to take what may be called a refresher course. Later, they returned to their village schools.

Enthusiasm was great those days. Often children and parents walked a long distance to meet the missionary on an itinerary. Each year, a lively song was chosen for the large associational meetings. In one place, the favorite was "Ezi nsangu zambote"- in English "The Old Time Religion", which all sang with great "pep" and remarkable rhythm. The little children were all very curious and enjoyed watching the strange white folks. In the midst of the palm branches, placed in the window openings of a missionary's mud house, it was rare not to find a multitude of bright shining eyes. The village school buildings, all very primitive, were generally made of mud, grass or palm branches. The furniture, if any, was simple of forest materials. The children sat on the dusty ground or on sticks, arranged or not arranged in rows. To be expected, the program was very elementary — some reli-

gious instruction and the beginnings of reading, writing and arithmetic. If a child did not have a slate, he wrote on the sand with a stick or with his finger. In the village church centers, where the better teachers were placed there was, as a rule, good order and a more comprehensive program. The pupils always had a band with instruments, varying from a big native drum to a piece of iron or a reed flute. They enjoyed welcoming missionary visitors with a "peppy" song and lively band music.

Building on the Foundation

We all wanted the work to grow, so we tried to improve the school. It was evident that, first of all, there must be better teachers. Next, more space was required for classes. The second problem seemed the easier to solve. After a few years, the mission builder transformed the old church by adding four rooms and an office. Furniture of Congo lumber followed — too solid to attract the insects: school desks, tables for teachers, and a cupboard for supplies. Still later, a model village school house of mud, built by village teachers and station school boys, furnished more room for the ever-increasing school population. After the opening of the medical school, the student nurses had brought their children. They were an interesting group, coming from all our stations, speaking different languages. A serious attempt was made to follow the new government program of 1938 for the Congo schools. Trained teachers from Kimpese were not numerous, but Boarding School graduates, with some extra training, faithfully did their best. As the years went by, from the new fields in the district, came the Macedonian call. Along with the church went the school — to the Bamfunuka and Badikadika, to the Bambeko, the Balula and the Bankanu. Chiefs with faces painted and marked, let their children receive a Christian education. Fetish worship lost its power and the Gospel of Christ triumphed.

In the older Christian areas, a new type of school appeared — the regional school. Churches, five or more, joined together to build an advanced village school, patterned after the station boarding school. Seven areas did this. They called their united effort "Kintwadi". Each school received a special name, chosen by the Congolese Christians. "Zola" (love) was the first in 1941. Then

followed "Luvuvamu" (rest) and "Nlemvo" (mercy) in 1943 and later "Kiese" (joy), "Yenge" (peace), "Luzizila" (patience) and "Ngemba" (good-will). The regional schools review the village school program and take up more advanced work. The children have gardens of cassava, peanuts, rice, sweet potatoes, and corn. For additional food, they go home each week-end. Parents, however, prefer to send their girls to the church center school which is located in the village where the pastor lives. At both kinds of schools Bible is taught and religious services are held regularly, also classes for young Christians who wish to unite with the church. From these school groups come yearly a large number of the candidates for baptism.

Very popular have been the Girls' Camps. Since 1948, when the first camp took place at Kinsiesi, several have been held with great success. The Congo girls are anxious to learn and enjoy the fellowship with their Christian friends.

Today

The Sona Bata Station School is still on the Hill Top. It trains a small select group of about 300 boys and girls from the surrounding district in which we have, according to the latest statistics, a school enrollment of over 5,000.

7 regional schools	439
34 church center schools	1,846
157 small village schools	2,803

Our most pressing need today is that of new buildings for schools and dormitories. The ones we have are old in a pitiful state, and not large enough according to government regulations. If we cannot find a way to improve this situation, soon our school will no longer be recognized by the state authorities. Because we lack money for required buildings, must we lose our opportunity to give 5,000 children a Christian education? Solomon says: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." These words of wisdom apply to Congo as well as to the homeland. If we want a strong Christian church in the Congo, we must not neglect the children. To lead the little children to Christ is a most important part of our missionary work. There-

fore we cannot fail to see the need of schools in the Belgian Congo. And as you, our friends, think of the great missionary work of Africa, we trust that you will not forget the needs of the School on a Palm Tree Hill Top.

C. A. P.

JEAN LUCKEY

SEND us a Teacher!" "Yes, we have the children but we have no teacher." How often these pleas ring in our ears as we meet with our Congolese pastors and leaders. It has been heartbreaking to realize how few teachers we have for our village and regional schools, especially teachers with even a little training. This has been true for a long time but now when we are trying to improve our school program to meet government standards it is even more evident. Imagine sending sixth or eighth grade boys and girls to conduct schools and teach their younger brothers and sisters.

At last we are taking a forward step to help meet this need for trained teachers. With the government program has come a new course, *Le Cours d'Apprentissage Pédagogique*, which is designed to give two years of special teacher training to students who have completed second or third year of second degree.

Our first class at Sona Bata entered in January 1950 and have now completed their first year of study. True to native custom this first class was a bit apprehensive of new and for them untried work, but we are happy to see them complete the year expressing their interest and enthusiasm for their new studies. In addition to the usual studies of arithmetic, reading and writing and others, there are methods of teaching, how to build and conduct a school, the qualities of a good teacher. These young men and women will not go into schools which are already well organized, well equipped and housed in beautiful buildings. On the contrary, they will doubtless have to build their own school house as well as their own houses and dormitories for the pupils, using whatever material is at hand—sun-dried bricks and thatched roofs

perhaps. They will build desks of split logs set on crotched sticks, or they may make a sort of lattice affair of split palm branches. We hope it will gradually be possible to provide sufficient text-books — a Bible, reading book and arithmetic book, a slate and pencil, or better still note books and pens and ink for the pupils. These teachers are going forth in another year to build—school houses, school programs and new young Christians!

Above all, new Christians. Because as we teach them the principles of teaching, we are endeavoring to help them sense in a real way their own Christian faith and experience and instil within them the insatiable desire to bring the youth under their care to Christ. It is this, after all, that offers the real challenge. The missionary cannot possibly reach personally all the young and old in this great country. But she can help prepare Christian teachers and pass on this burning desire to them to lead others to Christ and so thru those whom she trains, win many to Him.

The C.A.P. has taken its rightful place in the educational program at Sona Bata. This first year has given us hope and promise of more trained teachers for the future. True, they will be trained for the primary grades, as that is where our need lies. We do not need to search for pupils. There are more boys and girls athirst for learning than we can possibly accept. Yet how can we continue to turn many away? Indeed the Great Teacher said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me!" Can we do less?

CALLING ALL GIRLS

JEAN LUCKEY

CALLING all girls! Here come a group from the church at Kundi, another from Kiyanga, another from Sadi. Girls are coming from all directions, carrying their food and sleeping mats on their heads, prepared to spend five days at camp. During the past three years girls' camps have become a real part of your missionary's program during the school vacation.

Comparatively few of our village girls have been able to attend the village or station school. Therefore they are eager to come

to camp. During this year's dry season we conducted two camps between *matondo* meetings on the weekends. Time does not permit us a complete round of the district in one year so we have contented ourselves by working in one part of the district each year with the girls. The first camp this year was held out at Kilembika which is one of the most distant church centers in our area. Because it is far away we had only 30 girls in attendance but they were as hungry for all that we had to give as the 130 at the second camp.

The day begins with a prayer service at 6 a.m. This year we chose women of the Bible as our theme for prayer services. Then follow classes of Bible lessons, What it Means to be a Christian, health lessons, memory verses, and singing. In the middle of the morning there is a time for games, gymnastics and free recreation. The afternoon is set aside for reading-lessons and sewing. The girls have been thrilled as they discovered they can learn to read as well as their brothers who are in school. We have been pleased this year with the use of the new lessons prepared by Dr. Laubach to teach reading with the use of pictures. They are especially prepared for adults but have proved successful with our village girls too. In addition to our head teacher, Tsiebele Thomas, from the boarding school, and a monitrice, Nzumba Selipa, we had three students from the new teacher – training course to help with the camp programs. Between us we divided the girls into 6 or 7 groups for reading lessons and thus we could give considerable individual instruction.

In the evening we gathered around camp fires for native games, singing, and prayer service to close our day.

Camp is closed and the girls gather around the car as we put in our loads preparatory to leaving for the next camp. Their song "Luenda kiambote" "Go well" rings in our ears and hearts as we drive away with a promise to return again as soon as we can.

The camps offer the only opportunity for many of these girls to gather in such groups and study and meet together. It is only a taste at that, and we long to give them more real spiritual and mental food. We hope and pray we may be able to keep our promise to return soon again!

A WILLING HEART

EMILY SATTERBERG

A LITTLE over a year ago I had the privilege of taking part in one of the meetings at Binanga. Among the group who left Sona Bata with me was Nanama David, one of our student nurses. His father is the Pastor at Binanga and his brother one of the deacons. This church is not a large church but there are some faithful Christians.

Our candidates were ready for Baptism and we marched down to the stream for the service. The stream was small and had been banked. However when we arrived we found that the water was not deep enough. Nanama without being asked to do so, as he was a visitor, grabbed a shovel, pulled off his shoes and socks, rolled up his trousers and went to work with a will. In a short time the water had backed enough for us to go on with our service.

That is the way with Nanama; he never spares himself, he has a willing heart for anything. In school he worked well and was always seeking to get more and more knowledge. He taught school for awhile and then he decided that he wanted to become a nurse. He entered training and the same helpful spirit prevails. When it came time for him to do his year of practical work he was asked to care for the lepers at our leper camp. At first he hesitated and who would not, just the name of leper would frighten one, but not Nanama. He accepted and during his year there he practically transformed the camp. He entered whole heartedly into his work. He had many problems but he tackled them and won the love and respect of the camp. He was not afraid to work, he had a willing heart and found joy in his work.

When it came time for him to leave the camp in order to return to Medical School for his last year of study he was quite concerned about the work and wanted to know who was going to carry on. He realized that the lepers needed help and care. (A graduate nurse was sent).

For many years Nanama's father was the Pastor of our Sona Bata Church. Nanama was brought up on the Mission Station. I asked him when and how he became a Christian. He said in

1939. He told me how he sat in church and heard sermons and when it was time for the Communion Service he would have to leave because he was not a believer. This caused him much shame and he realized that unless he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour he could not be in fellowship with God nor a member of the Church.

After many trials and temptations he finally yielded his life to Christ. He was also baptized and said he was very happy to show to the world that he had accepted Christ as his Saviour, that he could joyfully sing, "What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Just recently Nanama and his wife pledged themselves to full-time Christian Service. So I asked him why he wanted to give his life in Christian Service. He replied, "'I am not my own, I am bought with a price. If God prepares the way for me to work for and with Him then that is what I want to do. I will do it until God shows me another way. When I think of the price that was paid for me, then I am in debt to my Saviour and I must give my life in His Service. My father taught me the Word of God in my early childhood and so did the Missionaries. Now I must go and teach others. I am ready to be molded by Him."

THE REASON

We mutter and sputter,
We fume and we spurt,
We mumble and grumble,
Our feelings get hurt,
We can't understand things,
Our vision grows dim,
When all that we need
Is a moment with Him.

STATISTICS

Evangelistic:	Organized Churches 49	(Self-Supporting 43)	
	Church Members	8332	
	Baptized, 1950	550	
	Native Pastors	37	
	Village Teacher-Evangelists	235	
	Bible Women	16	
	Given by church for Current Expenses	303,361	francs
	Given by church for Benevolences	51,095	francs
Education:	Missionary staff	2	
	Number of schools of all grades	202	
	Total number of pupils	5502	
	Native teaching staff	221	
	Missionary teaching staff	1	
Medical:	Hospitals	1	
	Beds available	94	
	In-Patients	1917	
	Out-Patients	11,060	
	Major Operations	339	
	Minor Operations	759	
	Appropriations for Upkeep	11,000	francs
	Special gifts	29,000	francs
	Government grants	174,537	francs
	Fees paid by patients	490,892	francs
	Rural Dispensaries	7	
	Beds available	66	
	In-Patients	906	
	Out-Patients	35,804	
	Minor Operations	108	
	Leper Colony	1	
	Beds available	128	
	Patients	105	
	Gifts, Am. Miss. to Lepers	40,341	francs
	Other Gifts	2,940	francs
	Government grants	67,000	francs
	Total Staff: Missionary Doctors	3	
	Missionary Nurses	2	
	Qualified Native Nurses	16	
	Native Nurses in Training	45	
	Mid-Wives in Training	9	